Packaging of Cement/Fertilisers in HDPE/PP bags

2472. SHR IBANGARU LAXMAN: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that HDPE/PP bags are more suitable for packaging of cement, fertilizers and other such items which are prone to pilferage in transport leading to malpractice affecting the common consumer in the country;

(b) whether Government have received representation for exempting these industries from the order of compulsory packaging;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) how far Government propose to accede to their representations?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R. L. JALAPPA): (a) Perceptions differ in this matter and no final consensus has emerged as yet. Various study reports (like National Council for Cement and Building Materials) establish that see page loss occurs in case of both HDPE and jute bags & is only marginally higher (about 0.4 per cent) in case of jute bags.

(b) to (d) Yes Sir. Representations have been received from the Cement Manufacturers Association. The reasons advanced by the Association, inter-alia, are high Cement seepage in jute bags, loss of strength in transit and storage, difficulty in identification, dust pollution at packaging and handling point, more expensive than plastic woven bags, consumer preference to plastic woven bags. The Association had made similar submissions before the Standing Advisory Committee which heard the representatives of various user industries. The Committee submitted its recommendations before the Government. Government has approved continuance of the Mandat Use of Jute Packaging in respect of Foodgrains, Sugar and Urea but deferred the proposal pertaining to the use of jute in packaging of Cement.

Brahmaputra Board

2473. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) when the Brahmaputra Board was set up alongwith the mandate it enjoyed as per provisions of the Act, which gave rise to it;

(b) the work done by the Board and the corresponding expenditure incurred since inception with details thereof:

(c) whethesr it is a fact that for most part important posts in the Board were lying vacant since its inception:

(d) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(e) the proposed aition on the master plan and detailed project reports with details about implementing agencies, investment plan, etc.?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI SIS RAM OLA): (a) The Union Government constituted the Brahmaputra Board, a statutory body under an act of Parliament (46 of 1980) on 31st December, 1981. The Board was established to provide for the planning and integrated implementation of measures for the control of floods and bank erosion in both the Brahmaputra and Barak Valley and for matters connected therewith.

(b) Since its formation in 1981, the Brahmaputra Board has drawn up Master Plans for comprehensive flood management in both the Brahmaputra and Barak Valleys. Master Plan Part-I concerns the main stem of the Brahmaputra river. Master Plan Part-II concerns the river Barak and its